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ON PAGE

WASHINGTON TIMES
15 SEPTEMBER 1982

JOHN LOFTON'S JOURNAL

Kissinger responds to Zumwalt attack

This is the second of three columns based on an interview with former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.



Q: All right. In a new booklet authored by former CIA analyst David Sullivan, titled "The Bitter Fruit of SALT: A Record of Soviet Duplicity," Sullivan charges that the Soviets used negotiating deception during SALT I and SALT II and that they have violated both agreements. Do you agree?

A: What he means by negotiating deception, I don't know.

Q: Really?

A: I'd have to know what he means by negotiating deception.

Q: He means that they tricked us, they said something that wasn't true, they lied.

A: I would assume the Soviet Union negotiates with us in their typical manner, which I tried to describe in my two lengthy books, which is to try to squeeze every last advantage out of a negotiation. On actual violations, I'm familiar with one which they stopped when we called it to their attention.

Q: What was that?

A: That had to do with turning on radar for anti-aircraft weapons, in an ABM mode. They did that, I forget how many times, and we protested. And, at least during my period in office, it didn't happen again.

What they did do — I don't know whether you call that lying or how you would characterize it — they would have the tendency to insist that every new weapon they were building was a modernization of an old weapon, while every new weapon that we were building was a totally new weapon and therefore they were permitted to do what was proscribed.

When you negotiate with the Soviets, you know you're going to have to guard against this sort of chiseling. And that undoubtedly went on.

Q: Was it just petty chiseling?

A: It depends on your assessment of whether -

Q: Well, I'd like your assessment. I'm very interested to know whether or not you found out subsequently that the Soviets did anything you think were lies?

A: You are asking me about SALT I and SALT II?

Q: res.

A: I cannot honestly think of a flat-out lie. On the other hand, they undoubtedly attempted to use these negotiations to get the maximum advantage to themselves.

I like to believe we also attempted to get an advantage for ourselves. And our problem was that at the time the Soviet Union was building 200 missiles a year and we were building none. And we thought that we would never catch up unless we put an end to the numerical buildup. So that within the constraints of the numerical buildup they developed a whole new set of missiles. You can call that lying. It was certainly against the spirit of what we were trying to do.

In Friday's Journal: Kissinger talks about why detente failed, Alexander Solzhenitsyn and possible Soviet disinformation against himself.

EXCERPTED